SARS cases

765. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of SARS reported in the country alongwith the number of casualties;

(b) whether it is a fact that many of the reported cases did not conform to the konwn symptoms of this deadly infection;

(c) if so, whether the existing laboratory facilities are inadequate for carrying out such tests; and

(d) if not, the details of the reason for differences in the WHO and the Government's announcements on the SARS cases in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) The World Health Organisation (WHO) defined SARS in two categories *i.e.* 'suspect' SARS and 'probable' SARS. Government of India adopted the WHO case definition. Accordingly only three 'probable' and ten 'suspect' cases were reported. There were no deaths due to SARS in the country.

For these cases, the two apex laboratories, National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Delhi and National Institute of Virology, Pune were found adequate. In addition, three more laboratories were geared up and kept in readiness to test the samples for SARS.

The number of cases reported in India differed as WHO reported only 'probable' cases and not 'suspect' cases.

Disposal of waste in hospitals

766. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 40,000 used syringes are generated by 85 hospitals in the capital every day;

(b) whether only 40 per cent of these are destroyed or incinerated and recycled syringes are used on almost two-third patients in the country; and

(c) if so, the reasons for hospitals and nursing homes having not installed incinerators and made them operational and not managing the waste properly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare does not maintain such information. In so far as Central Government Hospitals in Delhi *viz.*, Safdarjung Hospital, Dr. R.M.L. Hospital, Lady Hardinge Medical College and Associated Hospitals and All India Institute of Medical Sciences are concerned, used syringes are decontaminated at source as per the method laid down in the Bio-Medical Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 1998. Thereafter, the same are shredded and disposed of. The incinerators are already installed in all Central Government hospitals, which are operational and functioning satisfactorily.

Control of fatal diseases

†767. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have controlled the growing fatal and dangerous diseases; and

(b) the details of the steps Government have taken to prevent spreading of the dangerous diseases like AIDS, cancer, hepatitis, etc. in the inhabitants of rural areas and unauthorized colonies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government of India has adopted a multi-pronged strategy in order to control the growing fatal and dangerous diseases like AIDS, cancer, hepatitis and is implementing National AIDS Control Programme, National Cancer Control Programme etc. in order to control these diseases.

(b) The details of the steps taken by the Government to control growing fatal and dangerous diseases are given in the enclosed statement.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.